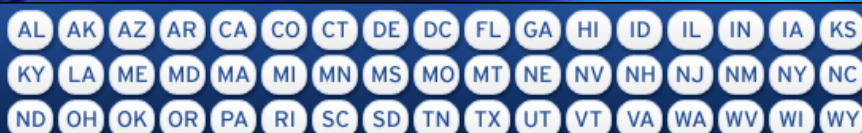




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# ABC 4 Investigation: Pregnancy hormone for weight loss?

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SALT LAKE CITY (ABC 4 News) - From diet pills to herbal teas, low carb to no carb, weight loss wonders are a billion dollar business and the latest trend has many wondering if it really works.

Author and self-made millionaire Kevin Trudeau is touting a pregnancy hormone called HCG as a cure-all for weight loss. A theory that has been that was first introduced in the 1950's by a Dr. Simeons and brought back to life by Trudeau's best selling book.



(ABC 4 News)

HCG is detected in the urine in pregnant women but is a hormone present in both genders. While it is FDA approved for fertility it is not for weight loss. Still, those who use it off label for weight loss say the results speak for themselves and clinics across the county are jumping on board this popular diet, including one right here in Utah.

Dr. Robert Moody runs the Bio-Restoration clinic in Draper. His clients say they are losing weight, losing it fast and keeping it off with just one daily injection of the HCG hormone.

"It's sort of a mild pregnancy in which all of the body stores are now available for energy and nutrition," said Dr. Moody.

"It's a miracle diet," said Rich Bennion, a client who has lost more than 40 pounds.

"I feel fabulous. I feel ten years younger," said client Tamara Olsen, who's lost 30 pounds and is still losing.

"You just watch it shed off of you day by day," said Debi White, who lost four dress sizes and couldn't be happier.

Doctor Moody said the theory behind HCG is this: it taps into the stored fat in problem areas, fat that normal diet and exercise can't seem to get rid of. In fact, he said most patients lose half a pound to a pound every day.

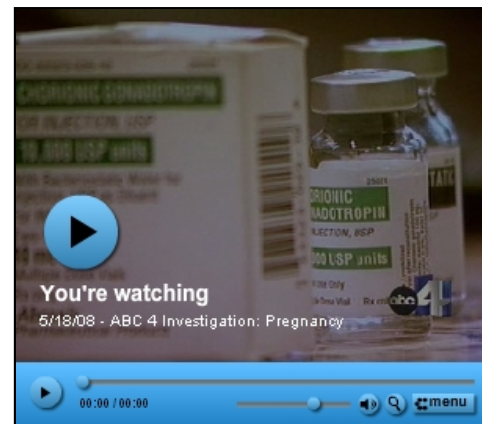
"You are motivated because each day another pound is dropping off and it's dropping off in the right places," said White.

But here's the kicker -- you can't eat -- at least not a lot. A five hundred calorie diet, limited to 6 ounces of lean meat, fruits, vegetables, and a specialized tea. A strict diet patients admit they could never stick to without the help of HCG.

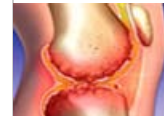
"If you only ate 500 calories a day, I'd be eating the leather on that chair, but you don't feel that way on this diet. You feel good," said Bennion.

Most patients stay on the HCG diet for an average of six weeks and after the diet is through Dr. Moody claims most of his patients are keeping the weight off.

"With this particular diet there are theories that the hypothalamus is affected and it creates a new set point in the body and actually considers a lower total weight as being normal," said Moody.



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But the extreme nature of the diet begs the obvious question: is it safe?

"The only long term effect has been a good one in which the set point in the brain has changed and a person is much less likely to have obesity," said Moody.

Dr. Mark Gibson is the chief endocrinologist at the University of Utah's Center for Reproductive Medicine. He said there is a reason the procedure is not FDA approved -- because it doesn't work.

"Scam is the word that comes to mind. The belief is that, which is false, if you diet to lose weight the HCG can make the diet work better, make your hunger less and make your weight loss greater, but there is no evidence that that is true," said Gibson. He added, "Any curbing of appetite that's been reported is almost certainly a placebo effect."

But Dr. Moody disagrees, saying the diet has worked for him and hundreds of patients he's treated.

"Most physicians have very little understanding and may have less than great tolerance with new ideas like this, so talking to them isn't always productive," said Moody

As for Dr. Moody's patients they don't seem worried concerned about what science suggests.

"If it's a placebo effect it's a very good placebo effect," said Rich Bennion.

"I don't care I feel great and if I feel great and seeing the results, and changes, the lifestyle, it's a success," said Tamera Olsen.

"You just watch it shed off of you day by day and every time you get on the scale, you think, 'I couldn't possibly have lost another pound today,' but you do," said Debi White.


Dr. Moody said most his patients have had no side effects and only a few have suffered mild nausea and bloating. He said no long term side effects have been noted.


For more information on HGC, visit the following sites:







- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human\\_chorionic\\_gonadotropin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_chorionic_gonadotropin)
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For more information on the Bio-Restoration Clinic in Draper, go to <http://www.biorestoration.com/>

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